

**STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
Virtual Meeting  
November 5, 2020**

**Call to Order:** Brittney Hogan called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. A quorum was present.

**Roll Call:**

**Members Present:** Bill Willis, Brittney Hogan, Jared Ferguson, Russ Cusack, Ben Johnson, Mark Bourdon, Gillian Plenty Chief, Royce Schultze, Carrie Miller

**Members Absent:** LaRae Gustafson, Nancy Lundon, Shannon Cook, Brenda Boehler, Drew Hanson, Matthew White

**Non-Council Members Present:** Aimee Volk, Randy Sorensen, Taylor Heine, Robyn Throlson, Daniel Gulya, Randy Sorensen, Angie Bosch

**Approval of August 2020 Minutes:** Mark Bourdon made a motion to approve the August 2020 SILC minutes, Gillian Plenty Chief seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

**Approval of November 2020 Agenda:** Jared Ferguson made a motion to approve the agenda Russ Cusack seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

**Correspondence – Brittney Hogan:** Received the SPIL back with needed changes which are in the process. It must be resubmitted by December 31, 2020.

**Treasurer’s Report – Bill Willis:** Reviewed the Treasurer’s Report. If you went to the APRIL virtual conference, please submit your reimbursements to Aimee as soon as possible. Bill is going to reach out to fiscal to find out where the money is being taken from so this can be discussed at the next meeting.

Bill sent out an email with clarifications to the budget during the meeting:

Unfortunately, we cannot move any unexpended SILC funds over to the CILs. The SILC funds were legislatively approved to be specifically utilized for the SILC operating costs and for salaries for the members. These funds are VR federal funds that cannot be used for anything else due to this legislative restriction.

**Mark Bourdon made a motion to approve the treasurer’s report with discussed clarifications forthcoming and Jared Ferguson seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.**

**Report on the APRIL Conference – Taylor Heine**

The theme for the 2020 Annual APRIL Conference was 2020 and Beyond: Building the Next Generation of IL. Independence Inc. help with the breakout sessions for the APRIL Conference. They got great experience with the functions they assisted with (interpreters and captioners through Zoom). Julie Hucker was a keynote speaker and did a great job. During one of the sessions they stated that 12,000 vocational goals nationwide were met by CILs. There were several great sessions. If you registered the sessions were all recorded so you can go back and review them.

### **Vote for New Council Roles**

#### **Chair**

Royce Schultze nominated Russ Cusack for the role of Chair. Russ accepted the nomination.

**Royce Schultze made a motion to appoint Russ Cusack as the Chair of the SILC. Motion was seconded by Gillian Plenty Chief. Voting resulted in \_8\_ Yes votes, \_0\_ No votes, and \_5\_ absent votes. Motion passed.**

#### **Vice Chair**

Russ Cusack nominated Gillian Plenty Chief for the role of Vice Chair. Gillian accepted the nomination.

**Russ Cusack Made a motion to appoint Gillian Plenty Chief as the Vice Chair of the SILC. Motion was seconded by Mark Bourdon. Voting resulted in \_8\_ Yes votes, \_0\_ No votes, and \_5\_ absent votes. Motion passed.**

#### **Secretary**

Bill Willis nominated Carrie Miller as the secretary. Carrie accepted the nomination.

**Ben Johnson made a motion to appoint Carrie Miller as the Secretary of the SILC. Motion was seconded by Russ Cusack. Voting resulted in \_8\_ Yes votes, \_0\_ No votes, and \_5\_ absent votes. Motion passed.**

#### **Treasurer**

Bill Willis stated he would continue as the role of treasurer. There were no other nominations.

**Royce Schultze made a motion to appoint Bill Willis as the Treasurer of the SILC. Motion was seconded by Russ Cusack. Voting resulted in \_8\_ Yes votes, \_0\_ No votes, and \_5\_ absent votes. Motion passed.**

### **Updates on the Olmstead Commission – Daniel Gulya**

He works with Protection & Advocacy and works full time for Olmstead. He discussed a brief history of Olmstead. In 1999 the U.S. Supreme Court found unjustified segregation of people with disabilities is a form of unlawful discrimination under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In 2000 North Dakota started implemented an Olmstead plan and an executive order was completed. Daniel discussed the 2018 executive order and the make up of the Olmstead Commission in North Dakota. They are going to be coming out with a new website. Daniel is

going to start some Town Hall Meetings in the next month to get more information (strengths and weaknesses) within the confines of the given communication during the pandemic.

Daniel would like to work with the CILs to work on how to best communicate with individuals given communication challenges.

### **Outreach and Training to CILs from CAP – Russ Cusack**

Russ provides outreach to the Client Assistance Program (CAP) to CILs and Vocational Rehabilitation. He will be reaching out to the CIL directors and can provide training on CAP. He does not reach out to the clients but is more of an educator of the services that CAP can provide.

### **Committee Breakouts**

#### **Quarterly Director's Report:**

Randy for Options: See attached.

Royce for Dakota Center for Independent Living: See attached.

Scott and Taylor for Independence, Inc.: See attached.

Aimee for Freedom: See attached.

#### **Committee Reports:**

##### **Governance Committee – Royce Schultze:**

- Looking for a member for Quadrant IV
- In March 2021 there will be an opening for Rep of a CIL
- In March and June 2021 there will be an opening for Quadrant III
- Several people in 2021 will need to submit for reappointments which can be done on the Governor's website.

Royce gave an update on the training needs assessment results and the SILC self-assessment report.

Internal Affairs – Brittney Hogan: See Grid.

External Affairs – Drew Hanson: See Grid.

##### **State Rehabilitation Council – Aimee Volk:**

- Worked with ND Assistive, CILs, and Vocational Rehabilitation was able to get a proclamation for National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) and a press release was done.
- ND VR is celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the federal VR program
- 50% of VR staff are working remotely from their home
- VR is facilitating the training to employment specialist employed at eight community rehabilitation providers. Customized Employment is an employment tactic resulting in integrated competitive employment to individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- VR coordinates effort with the N.D. Tax Department to inform stakeholders of ND tax incentives available to employers hiring individuals with disabilities

- Support an increase the number of individuals with a behavioral health diagnosis and/or traumatic brain injury through VR and Medicaid funding.
- VR provides pre-employment transition services to 2,482 students with disabilities
- 525 consumers exited the VR program (during program year October 2019 to October 2020) having gained successful employment
- VR is aware that Individuals with disabilities are losing as well as declining employment due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Traumatic Brain Injury Council – Shannon Cook: No report.

Committee on Aging – Royce Schultze:

- Aging services talked about the increase in the cost of meals due to packing meals to go \$4.50-\$7.
- ADRL grant 50 nursing facilities have iPad or small laptops 22 nursing facilities have not requested any.
- Individual's feeling social isolation or depression and is over 18 and have a disability and live alone in the community or assisted living are eligible for up to 15 hours/month of companion services to do activities at home or in the community.
- Changed eligibility for SPED so more people are eligible for services.

Olmstead Commission – Scott Burlingame: No report.

Quarterly Region 8 Conference Call – Brittney Hogan: No report.

Public Comment: None

The next SILC meeting will be February 4-5, 2020 in Bismarck, ND.

**Mark Bourdon made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Royce Schultze seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.**

## **Dakota CIL Directors Report, November 4, 2020**

### Office update

- We are open and seeing consumers by appointment only.
- All visitors are required to wear face masks and use sanitizer when entering office.
- Office is cleaned Monday-Friday.
- Staff traveling out of state will follow CDC guidelines upon returning to work.

### CARES

- Had a ramp built for an individual that moved from a nursing facility
- Working on installing a walk-in shower for individual unable to use a tub
- Working on a ramp for individual returning home from cancer treatments
- 85 people received essential food bags from Bismarck, Steele, Wilton, Bismarck, Strasburg, Linton, Hague, Steele, Tuttle, Pettibone and Hazelton. Staff contacted public health and senior centers, food pantries, and churches for assistance.
- 27 people received emergency kits from Steele, Wilton, Strasburg, Linton, Hague, Steele, Tuttle, Pettibone and Hazelton.
- 9 iPads and 7 Chromebooks have been loaned out
- Homeless Coalition is putting together 200 bags to be give out during Hunger and Homeless week of Nov 9-13. With CARES funds, we purchased 200 bottles for hand sanitizer and 200 reusable masks to be included

### Consumer Services

- Halloween Painting YESS group 15 attended virtually 9 in person
- Adult coloring and talked about COVID related topics. 14 attended virtually
- Scavenger Hunt 5 attended virtual
- Had a class on the basics of using iPads 5 seniors received from Lutheran Social Services. Turning off and on, set up new emails and how to access the internet.
- Health and Safety class talked on Wellness Education and Empowering Choices. 14 attended virtually.

### Community Services

- Partnered with Scott Bernstein, Go Universal to do a virtual presentation on home modifications and recreation.
- Disability Awareness video with Morton Mandan Public Library's Virtual Book Worm Tales Event. Two YESS members read My Buddy and All my Stripes.

### [Disability Awareness Collaborative Project](#)

### MFP

- Working on budgets for 2021 and 2022 and job descriptions.
- Transitions MFP 5 2019-20
- ADRL 1 2020-21

### Other

- Government Administrative Committee met virtually- reviewed total cost for ADA compliance \$461k. Additional \$260k to improve accessibility. Bill draft for \$750k for the changes and declare the bill an emergency measure.
- Former board member moved to Boise and is now working there with youth.
- New website

Independence Directors Report-SILC 11/2/2020  
Scott Burlingame, Executive Director

COVID 19 Office Update: Our staff are encouraged to work at home whenever possible. We have provided PPE to over 150 people.

**1. Individual Services**

- Using the ADRL funds, we have transitioned 7 people from institutionalized settings into their own home. It has been a great example of how we can do more, and help more people, with less bureaucracy around how we apply funds.
- Thanks to donations from community members, we have been able to provide people who are moving home with supplies for living at home. This can include such things as sheets and blankets, toiletries, dishes and much more.
- We held a cooking class called “Eggciting Microwave Cooking.”
- On Sept. 14<sup>th</sup>, we did our first of what we hope is many Career Connections, this one was a Culinary Experience. The experiential learning program is an extension of the agency’s school-based youth transition services. Career Connections is designed to introduce students with disabilities to different industries and prepare youth for life following high school graduation. Throughout the program, students will examine their interests, identify career paths, develop soft skills, learn about post-secondary education options, establish relationships with local employers, and gain hands-on experience. We partnered with Prairie Sky Breads (PSB) to offer a virtual activity on through Zoom. Participants had the opportunity to tour the bakery, explore positions, gain a better understanding of job duties, and put their culinary skills to the test by preparing a PSB pizza at home.
- We have held two “Brushes + Brains” online painting classes. In had one we made a bird on a wire and another we did a black cat. They have been very helpful to help with mental health.
- On 8/25 we had Basic Woodworking, Participants discovered the fundamentals of wood crafting and learn how to build a pair of bookends.
- Since 8/1 we have served 20 through the Free Through Recovery program. We have been doing a lot of work with helping them with things like employment and housing. We one guy who had been homeless since February, and then he has been able to move his own home.



## **2. Living Independently through Healthy Social/Sexual Relationships**

This project was a joint collaboration between Independence, Inc. and the Domestic Violence Crisis Center/ Family Crisis Center (DVCC). We successfully improved both agencies capacity to ultimately increase both organizations capacity to provide project related services to people with disabilities of all ages. The partner organizations combined to increase our community's overall capacity to serve people with disabilities who are victims of sexual crimes.

When COVID 19 hit, we pivoted away from providing training one-on-one and began to develop virtual programming. Our programming wrapped up in late August, with 15 adults participating in the classes. The virtual classes covered such topics as communication consent and boundaries, rights, responsibilities, and where to find support.

We virtually provided services to 61 high school students with disabilities on the same topics.

Finally, we provided cross training between DVCC and Independence, Inc. So far Independence, Inc. has provided training to volunteers at DVCC on disability awareness and disability etiquette. DVCC staff provided training to Independence, Inc. on how to respond to suspected abuse and how to promote healthy relationships.

Here are some of the examples of our public outreach we did for that program.

**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE LESS LIKELY TO ESCAPE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SITUATIONS OR REPORT INCIDENTS DUE TO BARRIERS SUCH AS:**

LACK OF ACCESSIBILITY AT SERVICE FACILITIES

LACK OF AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE HOUSING

LACK OF PRIVACY AT MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS DUE TO ATTENDANTS

LACK OF ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION

Source: [https://hope-eci.org/\\_documents/disabilities.pdf](https://hope-eci.org/_documents/disabilities.pdf)

**WHAT DOES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LOOK LIKE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?**

MISMANAGING MEDICATIONS

DAMAGING ASSISTIVE DEVICES

ISOLATION AND/OR NEGLECT

FINANCIAL ABUSE

DEPRIVING INDIVIDUALS OF ACCOMMODATIONS

HARMING SERVICE ANIMALS

SOURCE: [HTTPS://NCADV.ORG/BLOG/POSTS/DOMESTIC-VIOLENCE-AND-PEOPLE-WITH-DISABILITIES](https://ncadv.org/blog/posts/domestic-violence-and-people-with-disabilities)



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH 2020

**IN 2019, 19% OF NEW DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS IN THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA IDENTIFIED AS PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.**

SOURCE: CAWS NORTH DAKOTA



ND



**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE HIGHER RATES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT AND ABUSE THAN THEIR NON-DISABLED PEERS.**

Source: <https://www.thehotline.org/resources/abuse-in-disability-communities/>



ND



St. Joseph's Community Health Foundation

### 3. Community Services

- **Curbside for a Cause:** On Aug. 20, We served around 75 Hot Dog/Corn Dog meals to members of the public, and then turned around, and thanks to our volunteers, delivered 119 meals to people with disabilities. We provided COVID-19 related rack cards to every person that got a meal that day.
- **Pride in the Street:** We attended Pride in the Street on 9/5. We provided outreach to 71 people that day, and I and R 7.
- **Minot Out of the Darkness Community Walk/Drive Thru:** We had a table at the event in Oak Park on Sept. 13. At that event, we provided outreach to 59 and provided information to 15.
- **Get Out the Vote:** Using Souris Basin Transportation, we offered rides to anybody who would like one to vote. Unfortunately, nobody took advantage of it, however, we did everything we could to provide info to people on how to safely vote.

### 4. Other

- We had our first ever rave on the Facebook page Minot ND Rants and Raves. Here it is: *Rave to Independence Inc., a Resource Center for Independent Living and their awesome event today- Curbside For a Cause! We appreciated the great lunch and being able to help those who cant get out because of the pandemic. Raising awareness and helping others. Great Job Independence Inc- thank you for helping so many in our community! - Becca Riopel Winter*
- Jamie, Taylor, and Leigha in our office created some disability themed pumpkins for display at the Pumpkin Walk at Woodland Trail a few weeks ago! We're pretty excited about them!



## **Options ND SILC Report November 2020**

### Home Modifications/Evaluations:

- \* Assisted 3 individuals with home accessibility designs reviewing the exterior as well as interior baths, kitchens and living areas providing recommendations on changes based on the consumers access needs.
- \* Gave technical assistance to a UND Fraternity to assist them in securing a ramp for a pledge with a spinal cord injury.
- \* Assisted the McVille Care Center with an Accessibility Evaluation with recommendations for change.
- \* Completed an accessibility evaluation with reports which could be used as a guide for development of a transition plan as part of USDA requirements for the cities of Carrington, Manvel, and Mountain
- \* Provided technical assistance to the City of New Rockford for improving their accessibility.
- \* Reviewed and shared various pieces of information related to the Independent Living movement and people with disabilities on Options Facebook page.
- \* Participate in local Municipal Planning Organization steering committee to discuss accessibility issues related to Public Rights of Way and accessible transportation issues.

### Community Education:

- \* Staff spoke to a group of 53 Physical and Occupational Therapy students attending the University of North Dakota via Zoom. Staff informed the students of their struggles living independently as well as their work at an independent living center. As part of that they spent time discussing IL philosophy and the effects of discrimination.
- \* Collaborated with the ND Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to present at a training highlighting the 30th Year Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### Advocacy:

- \* Successfully assisted a person we had transitioned into the community with advocating for and obtaining an automatic door opener for his apartment building.
- \* The owner of the building where our Harvey Options Resource Center office is in, applied for a North Dakota Resiliency Grant (which was included as part of the COVID CARES act) to obtain funds for an automatic door for the building. As a consequence two touchless, automatic doors were added.

## Home Improvements:

\* For many people with disabilities home upkeep can be a challenge and if a home becomes uninhabitable due to ones inability to keep it up it can cause people to move to a more restrictive environment. Because of this reality Options assists people to secure funding in order to maintain such things as shingles, plumbing systems and electrical systems along with making accessibility improvements. To that end Options assisted two families to make accessibility improvements by moving their washer and dryer to the main floor, adding a walk in shower and also to add storm doors, rain gutters, downspouts, and new roofing. Options specifically assists people in making various funding applications, bidding processes, and access evaluations.

Relocations: 5 relocations for the year, three of which were MFP. COVID has slowed down our work within the nursing facilities.

Diversions: 8 diversions for fiscal year.

## COVID Activities:

\* Options has continued to distribute PPE to North Dakotans which have included instructions for safe use of masks, how many times each can be worn and washed, gloves, thermometers and oximeters.

\* Assistive Technology: Options is continuing to assess the use of Chromebooks to assist staff in the delivery of services and to access support group activities. For some people it seems like a valid service delivery methodology but due to limited access to broadband and funneling down of cell phone signal it does not always provide a practical solution.

## COVID Groups:

\* Coffee and Chat, the purpose has been to assist individuals in combating isolation by seeing how individuals are doing, talking about various strategies to keep head above water and staying independent during the pandemic.

\* Party Line, the Peer Support Group started in Devils Lake to assist with isolation factors during the COVID pandemic. Volunteers call their peer support person on schedule that works for both of them. This concept has worked so well that we want to duplicate in rest of service area.

## **Freedom Director's Report**

### **November 2020**

#### Jamestown Office

- Ribbon cutting for the Sensory Garden in Jamestown that Beth, IL Advocate has been very involved with development of this garden. The Sensory Garden has many accessible features and the garden joins over 200 Braille trails and sensory gardens in 35 countries worldwide.
- Assisted with two MFP transitions and one ADRL transition
- IL Advocate attended State Health Insurance Commission (SHIC) training for Part D open enrollment
- Collaborated with Protection and Advocacy and held a virtual Freedom In Action event on voting in ND
- Facilitating IL Skills class with students in Valley City via Zoom

#### Fargo

- Currently facilitating IL Skills Class-Learn About Safe & Healthy Relationships and Living Well 101 Independence, both being held via Zoom
- Assisted with one MFP transition and two ADRL transitions

#### Lisbon

- Assisted in one MFP transition
- IL Advocate attended State Health Insurance Commission (SHIC) training for Part D open enrollment.

#### Wahpeton

- Coordinated Community Education presentation on SSDI/SSI

We are currently advertising for Peer Mentor/IL Advocate position, resumes have been slow to come in, position is open until filled.

Ramp program continues to be busy.

We are distributing Care Packages of household essentials to people affected by the pandemic.

Three ND Advocates and our Program Director attended the APRIL conference, there were positive comments about the virtual experience.

Two new Board of Director members joined the group.

We are holding a virtual award event all of November to honor individuals who are making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities.